

Index of Technical Assistance Providers

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Capacity assistance is a vital component of the capacity development program provided for in the 1996 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Numerous resources exist to help water systems build technical, financial, and/or managerial capacity. One challenge is matching the various agencies that provide this technical assistance with the water systems most in need of their assistance.

The following index is a "yellow pages" of technical assistance providers for water systems, community leaders, and DEQ district staff. This index is not all inclusive, but is a tool for systems who need assistance in a capacity issue.

The index is in two parts. The table includes contact information and a short summary of the services offered by each of the technical assistance organizations. Also included is a more comprehensive explanation of the services offered by each of the organizations. The Community Drinking Water Unit of the Water Bureau maintains this index and retains copies of brochures, newsletters, and other information supplied to us by these organizations.

Look for this index on our web site: www.michigan.gov/deg; click on Water, Drinking Water, Community Water Supply, Capacity Development (under Programs and Activities), Index of Technical Assistance Providers. For more information about capacity development issues, please contact Jean Shekter, DEQ, at 517-241-1241.

Index Technical Assistance Providers

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Technical assistance provider and contact information	Services offered	Type of water system Cost
AWWA, Michigan Section, Mentoring Program, www.mi-water.org Elgar Brown, DEQ, 517-241-1359 Chuck Van Der Kolk, Zeeland, 616-772-6212	Mentoring: Retired waterworks professionals provide administrative, managerial, and operational technical assistance to less experienced operators and managers.	Community water systems, member and nonmember. No cost to members for mentoring. Funded with membership dues
AWWA, Michigan Section, Small Systems Committee www.mi-water.org Gerry Burrows, Peerless Midwest, Inc. 616-527-0050 Chris Kenyon, City of Ionia 269-527-0370	Directs AWWA's efforts for small systems	"
DEQ, WB, Drinking Water & Env'l Health Sect. www.michigan.gov/deqwater Click on Drinking Water or contact the DEQ district engineer 517-241-1355	Regulatory oversight and managerial and technical assistance	Community water systems, no cost other than annual water system fee that all community systems must pay.
DEQ, WB, Drinking Water & Env'l Health Sect. www.michigan.gov/deqwater Click on Drinking Water or call 517-241-1355	Oversees contracts for providing technical assistance to small public water systems	Community and noncommunity water systems serving fewer than 10,000 people, at no cost.
DEQ, ESSD, Revolving Loan and Operator Certification Section www.michigan.gov/deq Click on Inside DEQ, Click on Env'l Science and Services Division, under Financial Assistance, click on Drinking Water Revolving Loan 517-373-2161	Administers the DWRF providing low interest loans. Provides technical assistance on revenue system matters.	All public water systems, at no cost.
DEQ, ESSD, Revolving Loan and Operator Certification Section www.michigan.gov/deq Click on News & Events, click on Training & Workshops, click on Operator Training & Certification 517-241-7199	Provides training, coordinates testing and certifies operators. Maintains database of over 4,600 operators.	N/A. Services provided to operators.
DEQ, ESSD, Retired Engineer Technical Assistance Program (RETAP) www.michigan.gov/deqretap 517-241-8176 or 800-662-9278 or The Retired Engineer Technical Assistance Foundation at 888-749-7886	Retired, experienced engineers provide on-site technical assistance specializing in pollution prevention; energy and operational efficiency recommendations offered state-wide.	Institutions of any size and businesses with less than 500 employees at no cost in Michigan.
Michigan Rural Water Association www.mrwa.net Dan Tarnowski 989-539-4111	Hands-on operational training. Administrative, managerial, operational technical assistance. Conference committee conducts conferences on regulations and provides classroom technical training.	Primarily rural municipal systems, both member and nonmember
Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP) 23 Care Drive P.O. Box 675 Hillsdale, MI 49242-0675 517-437-3346 Fax: 517-437-3480	Provide technical assistance to develop and manage affordable water systems. Conduct assessments, help create source water protection plans, security plans, plan and finance infrastructure projects, apply for loans and grants. Specialists work on-site with local officials, community leaders and system operators.	Small communities serving fewer than 10,000 people (priority to low income serving <3,300) at no cost. Requests typically from community leaders, system operators, or through referrals from USDA Rural Development or DEQ and others.
Rural Utilities Service (RUS), USDA Rural Development, Michigan Community Programs www.usda.gov/rus/water/ www.rurdev.usda.gov/mi/ Duane Reid, Gladstone, 906-426-1060x6 Christine Maxwell, Caro, 989-673-7588x6 Todd MacLean, Grand Rapids, 616-942-4121x6 Blake Smith, Traverse City, 231-941-0951x6 Frank Tuma, East Lansing, 517-324-5156	Provides loans, grants and loan guarantees to build, reconstruct or rehabilitate water, sewer storm sewer and solid waste systems in rural communities serving 10,000 or fewer people. Provides technical assistance to applicants regarding environmental issues, engineering, construction and federal financing. Loans are monitored until they are paid in full. RUS services provided at no cost.	Rural communities serving 10,000 or fewer people. Eligible applicants may include public bodies, non-profits and tribal governments who demonstrate that they can not obtain the necessary funding from other public and private sources at reasonable rates and terms that they can be expected to meet.

<p>Rural Utilities Service (RUS), USDA Rural Development www.usda.gov/rus/water/ www.rurdev.usda.gov/mi/ Jamie Teachworth, East Lansing, 517-324-5206 Frank J. Tuma, Program Director East Lansing, 517-324-5156</p>	<p>Administers the following programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program • Solid Waste Management Grant Program <p>These programs are on a national competition basis.</p>	<p>Eligible entities are IRS tax exempt private non-profit organizations that have the ability, background, experience, legal authority and capacity to provide technical assistance and/or training on a regional basis. Typical applicants are multi-jurisdictional groups such as regional planning commissions, the National Rural Water Association and the Rural Community Assistance Program.</p>
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AWWA

- Mentoring: Retired waterworks professionals serve as mentors for less experienced operators and waterworks managers. Conducts a self-assessment pilot program. The program is similar to mentoring provided by the Rural Community Assistance Program, RCAP. The mentoring program is available to all water systems at no cost, not just AWWA members, and AWWA is not using the program as a recruiting effort. Mentors can help with treatment, operations and maintenance, public relations, rates, records, cross connections, and consumer confidence reports. The mentoring program is funded through the AWWA and mentors receive no pay, but are reimbursed for travel and meals.
- Small Systems Committee: AWWA works primarily with municipal water systems. Direct AWWA efforts for small systems. The committee coordinates hands-on technical and classroom training.

DEQ: Water Bureau

- Field Operations Division; District Offices: The DEQ conducts plan review and evaluations. The DEQ is a “2nd Free Consulting Service” because it does provide technical assistance, particularly technical, and to a lesser extent, managerial. District engineers serve as both regulators and technical assistance providers.
- Drinking Water and Environmental Health Section: Federal grant money is available for technical assistance to the 12,000 community and noncommunity water systems serving 10,000 or fewer people. Two new contracts were recently awarded. One contract is to provide technical assistance to assess and reduce critical contaminants in small water systems. This will include on-site visits to systems with elevated arsenic levels and pilot projects at selected systems to develop arsenic reduction strategies and tools. On-site visits will also be conducted at small systems to collect and analyze samples for Phase II and Phase V contaminants. Another contract is to provide technical assistance by developing new training modules for community water systems serving less than 10,000. This will include one set of training modules to address priority issues for operators, with a second set to focus on small system managers and financial officials.

DEQ: Environmental Science and Services Division

- Revolving Loan and Operator Certification Section: RLOCS reviews the financial capacity for new systems. Currently RLOCS is also conducting financial assessments on small existing systems. The focus of their financial review of loan applicants is primarily on operation and maintenance costs. RLOCS also administers the Drinking Water Revolving Fund which provides low interest loans. Provides technical assistance on revenue system matters.
- Operator Training and Certification: RLOCS also provides training, coordinates testing and certifies operators. Maintains database of 4,630 operators. Working toward reimbursing training and travel for operators working at systems serving fewer than 3,300 people. Provides several courses each year at multiple sites covering all aspects of treatment and operation. Partners with universities in drinking water training and education efforts. Provides on line operator resources and working toward on line user access to certification records.
- Retired Engineer Technical Assistance Program: The RETAP receives funding primarily through the Clean Michigan Initiative. Retired engineers and other retired professionals provide on-site pollution prevention and energy efficiency technical assistance. Assessments of facilities are confidential, free of charge, and nonregulatory. There is no obligation to implement the recommendations given; however, significant savings can result.

RETAP is available to Michigan institutions of any size and to businesses with less than 500 employees in Michigan, including agribusiness. Assessors conduct an on-site pre-assessment and assessment and generate a report with recommendations for potential cost savings, energy savings and waste reduction.

Michigan Rural Water Association: MRWA helps rural communities, serving fewer than 10,000 people, with administrative, managerial, or operational concerns. Rural Water's field technicians visit at least 35 rural or RUS eligible public water systems per month, but will provide assistance to any public water system. Rural Water provides primarily hands-on training including wellhead protection, maintains a resource library and conducts rate studies.

- **Conference Committee:** Rural Water Conference Committee conducts training on regulations and offers technical classroom sessions. Rural Water conducted the Small Systems Conference funded through the Conference Committee and free of charge to any small system representatives, both members and nonmembers. Rural Water maintains a close relationship with the AWWA Small Systems Committee and the AWWA Mentoring group.

Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP), Community Action Agency: RCAP provides free technical assistance to small, rural communities with populations under 10,000 who have low to moderate median household incomes to develop and manage affordable water, wastewater and solid waste systems. Priority is given to communities with populations under 3,300 and low to moderate median household incomes. RCAP Technical Assistance Providers work on-site with local community officials, community leaders, and system operators at no cost to qualifying communities. These services help people gain access to safe drinking water supplies, properly treat and dispose of wastewater, create watershed and wellhead protection plans, plan and finance infrastructure projects, build leadership capacity, conduct vulnerability assessments and prepare emergency response plans, prepare applications and environmental reports, understand state and federal environmental regulations and requirements, rate studies and much more, depending upon the needs of the community. RCAP is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Health and Human Services, and the USDA/Rural Development. RCAP is a national non-profit program with six technical assistance providers serving Michigan.

Rural Utilities Service (RUS), USDA Rural Development:

- Provides loans, grants and loan guarantees to build, reconstruct or rehabilitate water, sewer, solid waste and storm sewer systems in rural communities serving 10,000 or fewer people. Eligible applicants may include public bodies, non-profits and tribal governments who demonstrate that they can not obtain the necessary funding from other public and private sources at reasonable rates and terms that they can be expected to meet. Priority is given to low income communities, those with DEQ violations, leverage from other funding sources, extending existing systems and entities working together. Provides technical assistance to applicants regarding environmental issues, engineering, construction and federal financing. Loans are monitored until they are paid in full. RUS services are provided at no cost.
- Administers Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program and a Solid Waste Management Grant Program on a national competition basis. Eligible entities are IRS tax exempt private non-profit organizations that have the proven ability, background, experience, legal authority and capacity to provide technical assistance and/or training on a regional basis. Successful applicants are typically multi-jurisdictional groups such as regional planning commissions, the National Rural Water Association and the Rural Community Assistance Program.